

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2915

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 23274

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, MO

SUBJECT: BENHIMA VISIT TO PARIS

SUMMARY: TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO PARIS OF MOROCCAN FOREIGN MINISTER BENHIMA INCLUDED LUNCHEON WITH FRENCH FONMIN JOBERT AND MEETING WITH PRESIDENT POMPIDOU. BENHIMA'S COMMENTS TO PRESS SUGGEST THAT HE FULLY SATISFIED WITH RESULTS OF VISIT. QUAI OFFICIALS MORE CAUTIOUS ABOUT RESULTS AND INDICATE FRENCH TOOK TOUGH LINE ON INDEMNIZATION ON WHICH NEGOTIATIONS TO RESUME SEPTEMBER 13. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING FORTY-FIVE MINUTE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT POMPIDOU, MOROCCAN FONMIN BENHIMA ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS "PROFOUNDLY SATISFIED" WITH RESULTS OF HIS VISIT. BENHIMA STATED THAT FRANCO-MOROCCAN COOPERATION WOULD RECEIVE A NEW MOMENTUM. IN TOAST AT BANQUET HOSTED BY FRENCH FONMIN JOBERT, HE ADDED THAT FRANCE WAS MOROCCO'S FIRST PARTNER IN CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC AREAS BY VIRTUE OF COMMON HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY. JOBERT IN HIS TOAST STRESSED HOPES THAT FRENCH LEAVING MOROCCO WOULD DEPART WITH MORE NOSTALGIA THAN BITTERNESS.

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2. FROM ALL PRESS REPORTS IT HAS BEEN EVIDENT THAT ISSUE OF LAND NATIONALIZATION WAS PREDOMINANT PREOCCUPATION ON BOTH SIDES, THOUGH BROADER ISSUES OF EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN POLICY WERE TOUCHED UPON. BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL, IN INTERVIEW WITH LE MOND PUBLISHED AUGUST 30, BENHIMA MADE CLEAR THAT MOROCCANS WERE SEEKING SOLUTION WHICH WOULD RESPECT PRINCIPLE OF INDEMNIZATION. SINCE HIS ARRIVAL, HE HAS MADE EQUALLY CLEAR THAT MOROCCO WOULD NOT BANKRUPT ITSELF IN ORDER TO MEET MAXIMUM DEMANDS OF FRENCH CITIZENS. (ACCORDING TO PRESS VALUE OF LAND REPOSSESSED, TOGETHER WITH HARVESTS, MACHINES AND LIVESTOCK, REPRESENT SOME 218 MILLION FRANCS, ALMOST DOUBLE ANNUAL FRENCH AID PROGRAM IN MOROCCO.)

3. QUAI DEPUTY DIRECTOR NORTH AFRICAN AFFAIRS DE WARREN TOLD EMBOFF AUGUST 31 THAT JOBERT HAD TAKEN VERY TOUGH POSITION WITH BENHIMA ON NEED FOR COMPENSATION AND RIGHT TO REPATRIATE PROCEEDS FROM THIS YEAR'S HARVEST AND SALE OF LIVESTOCK AND FARM MACHINERY. JOBERT INDICATED THAT IF MOROCCAN COMPENSATION NOT FORTHCOMING, THERE WOULD BE NOTICEABLE EFFECT IN OTHER AREAS (ACCORDING TO DE WARREN, IN FRENCH AID). BENHIMA PRIVATELY TOOK SAME POSITION HE HAD TAKEN IN PUBLIC THAT MOROCCO ACCEPTED PRINCIPLE OF COMPENSATION BUT DID NOT HAVE RESOURCES TO MEET FULL CLAIMS OF FRENCH CITIZENS. HE PROPOSED THAT CEILING OF 100,000 FRENCH FRANCS BE SET AS COMPENSATION LIMIT FOR CROP, MACHINERY AND LIVESTOCK AND THAT REMAINING ISSUES BE LOOKED AT TOWARDS END OF OCTOBER, BY WHICH TIME MOROCCANS WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET FILES IN ORDER. FRENCH REJECTED CEILING AND INSISTED ON EARLIER NEGOTIATIONS. BENHIMA RELUCTANTLY AGREED THAT NEXT ROUND SHOULD BE HELD SEPTEMBER 13.

4. DE WARREN, ANALYZING FRENCH POSITION, SAID THAT GOF WOULD CONTINUE TO INSIST ON COMPENSATION AND RIGHT OF TRANSFER OF PROCEEDS OF CROP AND SALE OF MOVABLE PROPERTIES WHICH WERE ESSENTIAL FOR RESETTLEMENT OF FARMERS IN FRANCE. ON ISSUE OF COMPENSATION FOR LAND ITSELF, HE SPECULATED THERE MIGHT BE MORE FLEXIBILITY, PARTICULARLY FOR LARGER AND WEALTHIER CATEGORIES OF LAND OWNERS. PRIORITY REMAINED SUFFICIENT COMPENSATION FOR IMMEDIATE RESETTLEMENT. TO FACILITATE PROCESS FRENCH HAVE APPOINTED FORMER AMBASSADOR TO SENEGAL ARGOD AS GOVERNMENT-WIDE COORDINATOR OF RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM.

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5. COMMENT: FROM ALL INDICATIONS, BENHIMA ARTICULATELY EXPOUNDED TO MOROCCAN CAUSE. FRENCH HOWEVER, STOOD FIRM AND ARE TAKING POSITION THAT IN LAST ANALYSIS MOROCCO NEEDS THEM MORE THAN THEY NEED MOROCCO. TOUGH NEGOTIATIONS REMAIN FOR FUTURE. BOTH SIDES WOULD LIKE TO SEE AMICABLE OUTCOME WHICH WOULD LAY BASIS FOR NEW FRENCH RELATIONSHIP WITH MOROCCO, BASED AS BENHIMA COMMENTED, NOT ON INTEREST OF SOME FRENCHMEN

BUT ON PERMANENT INTERESTS OF FRANCE.  
STONE

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